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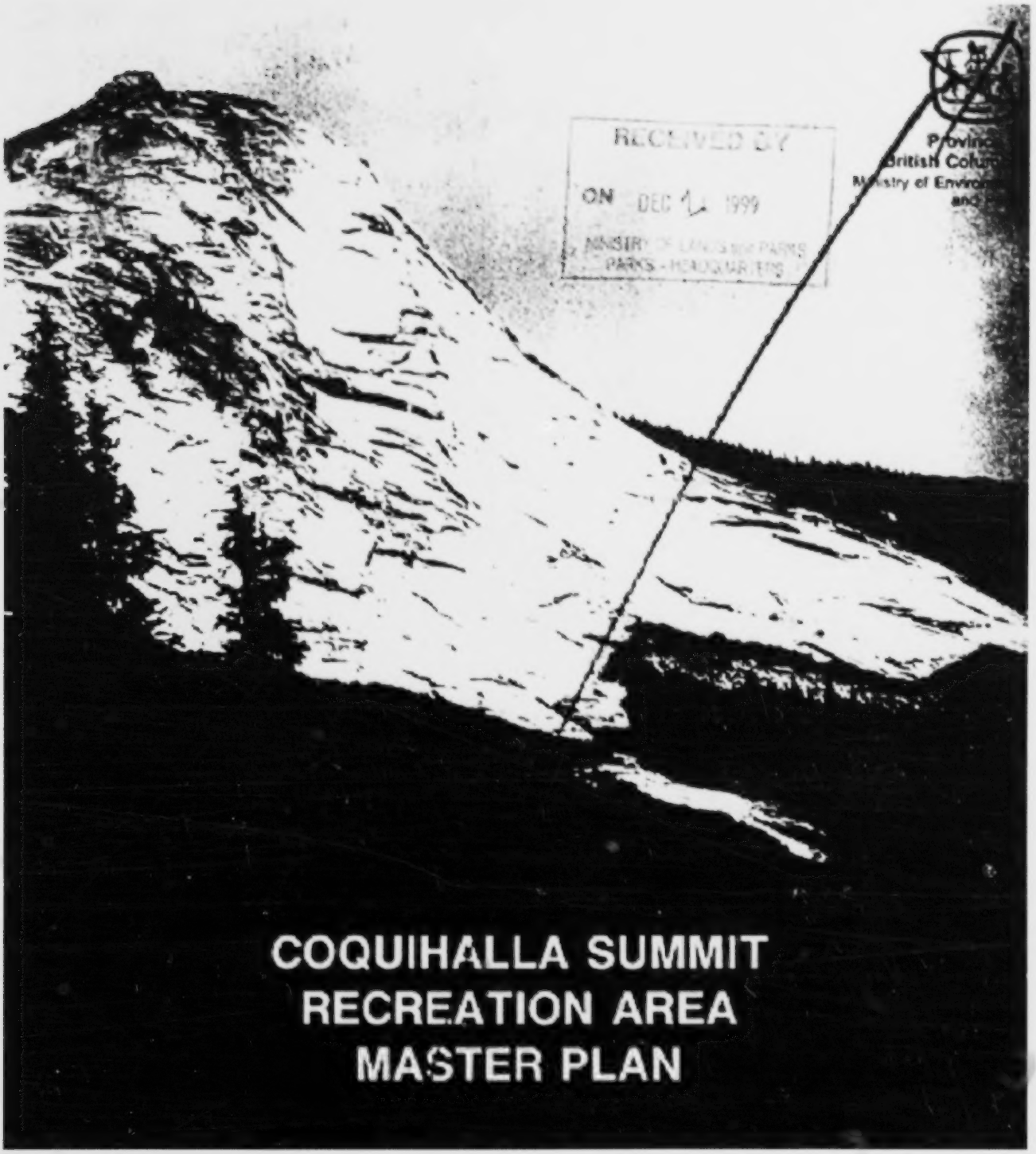

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Province of British Columbia
Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks

COQUIHALLA SUMMIT RECREATION AREA MASTER PLAN

Province of British Columbia

Ministry of Parks

MEMORANDUM

Mr. George Trachuk
Regional Director
South Coast Region

This Master Plan for the Coquihalla Summit Recreation Area is submitted for your consideration and approval.

M. H. Turner
Manager of Planning and
Conservation Services
South Coast Region

RECOMMENDED: _____ DATE: 90.01.08
Dennis H. Eggen
District Manager
Fraser Valley District

APPROVED: _____ DATE: 90.02.06
George Trachuk
Regional Director
South Coast Region

COQUIHALLA SUMMIT RECREATION AREA
MASTER PLAN

January, 1990

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COQUIHALLA SUMMIT RECREATION AREA

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COQUIHALLA SUMMIT RECREATION AREA
MASTER PLAN

1.0 PLAN HIGHLIGHTS

The Coquihalla Summit Recreation Area was established in 1986 as part of a series of lands designated to facilitate public recreational use of the Coquihalla Valley. Its purpose is to protect the Coast-Cascade Dry Belt Regional Landscape and to provide both opportunities for the care and convenience of the travelling public, such as viewing and picnicking and destination recreational opportunities such as hiking, rock climbing and backcountry ski touring.

Although the recreation area and highway have been open since 1986, use levels are observed to be low owing to the newness of the area.

There are three main issues to be considered in this plan:

1. the type and level of future development;
2. mineral exploration in the recreation area; and
3. the management of the rights-of-way corridors.

Based on the purpose of this plan and the issues to be addressed, this master plan establishes a set of management guidelines and direction statements. Specifically, the plan recommends:

1. Expanding some picnicking facilities while constructing major trails and two walk-in campsite areas.
2. Assessment of the mineral resources to determine future management options.
3. Managing the rights-of-way for recreational use where appropriate and closely monitoring the utility company's operations for adverse impact on recreation resources.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Plan Purpose

This plan has been formulated to guide the development of a variety of recreational opportunities and to determine the management requirements to meet the recreation area's conservation and recreation objectives.

2.2 Background Summary

Situated about 45 kilometres north of Hope, the recreation area encompasses 5,750 hectares of the Coast-Cascade Dry Belt Regional Landscape. As this is a transitional area between a coastal and southern interior environment, there is a significant diversity in resources and outdoor recreational features. Good examples of this diversity include the presence of four different biogeoclimatic zones and a variety of wildlife species. The dominant features are challenging granitic peaks that occupy most of the area and a number of interesting historic features of the Kettle Valley Railway.

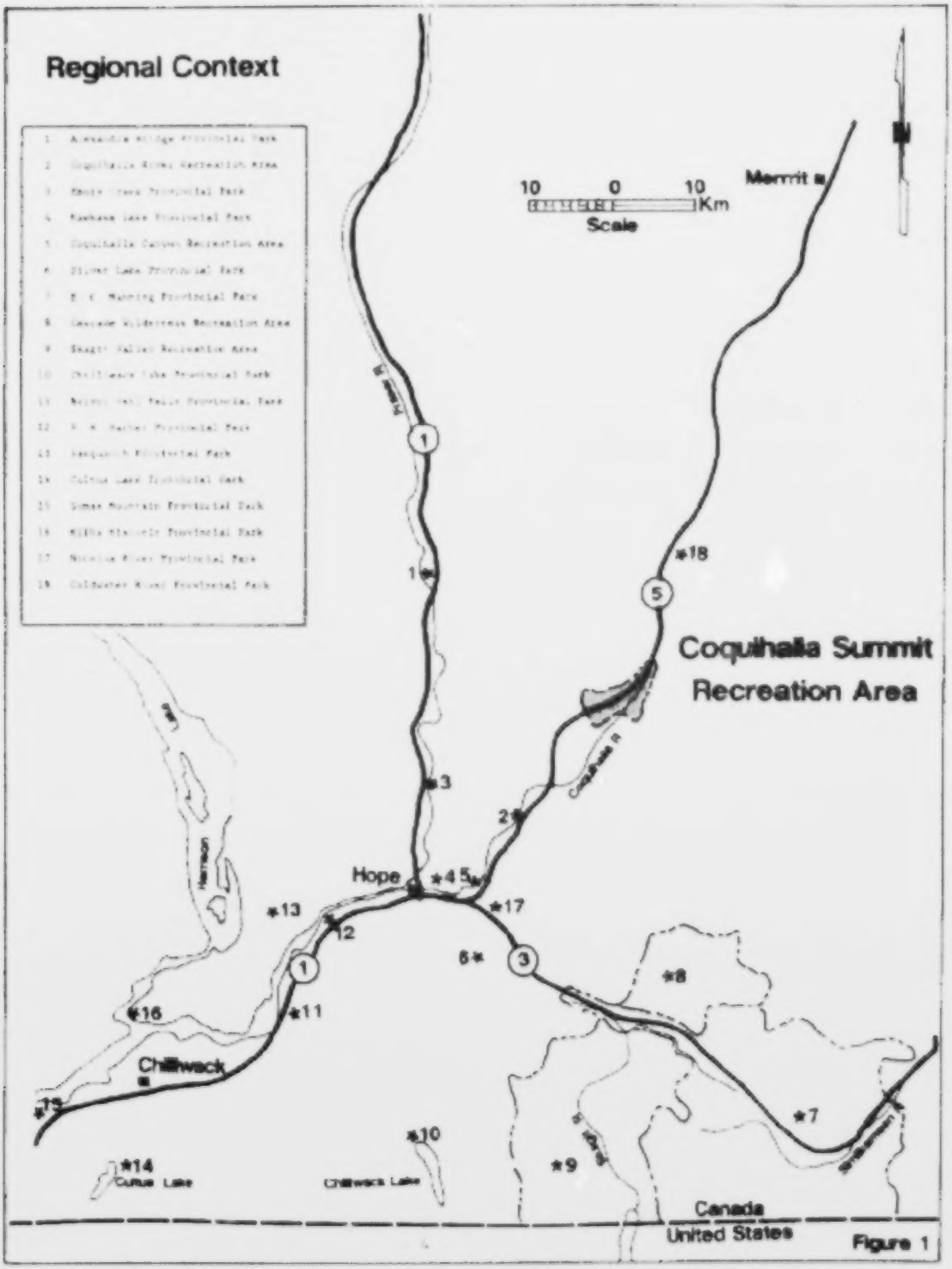
The Coquihalla Highway bisects the recreation area and provides excellent regional access. Initial development along the highway for parking and picnicking has enabled over 60,000 people annually to enjoy the attractive scenery of the recreation area.

3.0 ROLE OF THE PARK

3.1 Regional and Provincial Context

The Coquihalla Summit Recreation Area is situated in one of the major valleys linking the south coast area of the province to the southern interior. Access improvements provided through the construction of the Coquihalla Highway have created the third major travel corridor between these regions enhancing routes through the Fraser Canyon (Route #1) and the Similkameen Valley (Route #3). The Coquihalla Highway is expected to become equally as popular for tourist travel as the other routes have been in the past.

The communities of Merritt and Hope have traditionally used this region to serve their recreational needs for hunting, fishing, hiking and snowmobiling. There are now a number of provincial parks throughout this area offering a wide range of recreation opportunities (Figure 1). However, forestry and mining companies have been major land users for many years and in addition to major utilities and railways, are expected to continue to play a significant role in influencing land use. The lands adjacent to the recreation area have been studied for alpine skiing opportunities and are believed to be a potential regional destination resort.


Regional Context
1 Alexandra Bridge Provincial Park
2 Coquihalla River Recreation Area
3 Kawkawa Provincial Park
4 Kawkawa Lake Provincial Park
5 Coquihalla Canyon Recreation Area
6 Silver Lake Provincial Park
7 E. C. Manning Provincial Park
8 Cascade Wilderness Recreation Area
9 Skagit Valley Recreation Area
10 Chilliwack Lake Provincial Park
11 Bridal Veil Falls Provincial Park
12 F. H. Hatfield Provincial Park
13 Jesuit Provincial Park
14 Cultus Lake Provincial Park
15 Simon Mountain Provincial Park
16 Mills Memorial Provincial Park
17 Nicolum River Provincial Park
18 Coldwater River Provincial Park
10 0 10 Km
Scale
Merritt
Coquihalla Summit
Recreation Area
Hope
Chilliwack
Chilliwack Lake
Cultus Lake
Canada
United States
Figure 1

3.2 Conservation Role

The Coquihalla Summit Recreation Area conserves the Coast-Cascade Dry Belt Regional Landscape and two significant outdoor recreation features, the Zopkios Ridge massif and the Needle Peak massif.

Even though the landscape that encompasses the Coquihalla Summit Recreation Area is represented in Cathedral Provincial Park, its natural features are the most accessible for Lower Mainland residents due to the excellent access provided by the Coquihalla Highway.

The significance of Zopkios Ridge and Needle Peak as outstanding outdoor recreational features lies in the rock climbing, mountaineering and hiking opportunities they provide. The granite rock faces and rugged terrain are similar to the internationally popular Stawamus Chief near Squamish.

3.3 Recreation Role

The Coquihalla Summit Recreation Area role is to serve as a regional recreation destination while providing travel corridor recreational opportunities to the public.

In conjunction with the other parks/recreation areas along the Coquihalla Highway, the Coquihalla Summit Recreation Area serves the needs of the travelling public by protecting an attractive mountain environment for scenic driving and by providing a variety of convenient roadside recreational opportunities such as picnicking.

In terms of a regional recreation destination role, the recreation area and vicinity currently offer a variety of opportunities; however, considerable development and promotion by both the private and public sector would be required to realize the area's full recreational potential. In this regard, if the year round destination resort potential is developed by the private sector, the Coquihalla Summit Recreation Area and vicinity could become similar to E.C. Manning Provincial Park in terms of its role in serving as a year round destination for Vancouver residents while also addressing local recreational needs.

4.0 ZONING

The Coquihalla Summit Recreation Area is divided into two zones: Natural Environment Zone and Intensive Recreation Zone, with two sub-zones: Special Feature Sub-Zone and Development Sub-Zone (Figure 2).

4.1 Intensive Recreation Zone

The intensive recreation zone encompasses 660 hectares and provides for a variety of readily accessible facility-oriented outdoor recreation opportunities. Development levels are usually moderate to high with use levels of a high density. In view of the concentrated day use development and use within the highway corridor in comparison to other areas of the recreation area, the recreation lands on either side of the highway right-of-way have been included in the intensive recreation zone. Management of this zone is oriented toward maintaining a high quality recreation experience and may require intensive management presence to control visitor activities.

4.2 Natural Environment Zone

The prime objective of the zone is to provide for a variety of easily accessible non-mechanized outdoor recreational opportunities in a largely undisturbed natural environment. This 5,066 hectare zone is characterized by low use levels and development, oriented to user convenience, such as trails, walk-in campsites and primitive shelters. The majority of the recreation area has this potential; consequently, the natural environment zone has been applied accordingly. Within these zones, there are several areas which require more specific management direction. This is accomplished through the designation of the following sub-zones.

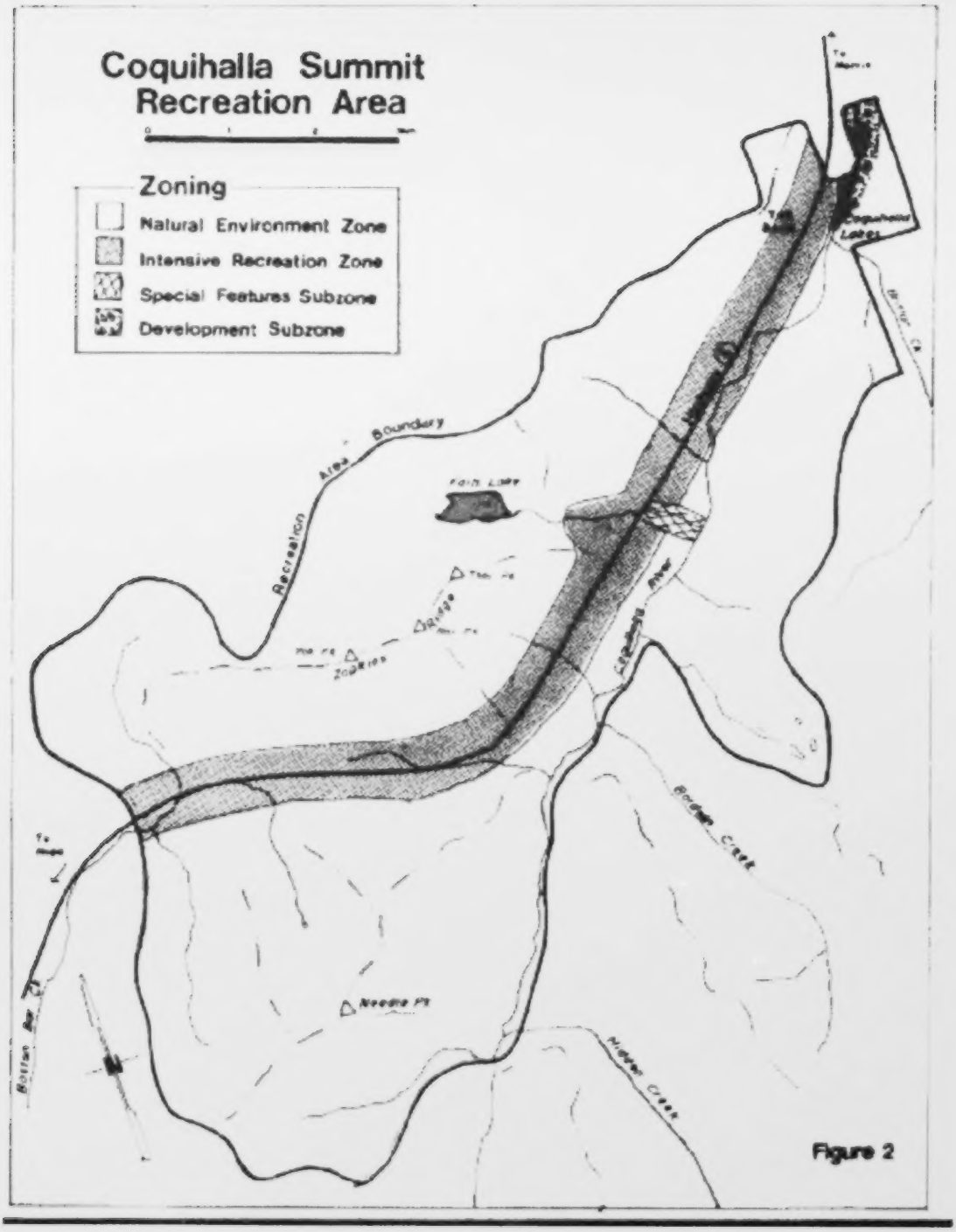

Coquihalla Summit
Recreation Area
Zoning
Natural Environment Zone
Intensive Recreation Zone
Special Features Subzone
Development Subzone
Recreation Area Boundary
Coquihalla River
Boston Creek
Hamilton Creek

Figure 2

4.3 Special Feature Sub-Zone

The Special Feature Sub-Zone is to preserve significant natural or cultural resources, features or processes because of their special character, fragility or heritage value. The 21 hectare area encompassing the Falls Creek Falls fulfils this criteria. If the Kettle Valley Railway is added to the park, the railway trestle will be included in this sub-zone.

4.4 Development Sub-Zone

This sub-zone is applied to concentrations of high use visitor services and facilities in the natural environment zone, areas where the presence of man is plainly obvious and may dominate the natural environment. The day use area of three hectares proposed at the Coquihalla Lakes is included in this sub-zone.

5.0 NATURAL AND HERITAGE RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

5.1 Introduction

The overall management of resources will be based upon the *Park Act*, Park Regulations, ministry policies and the role of the Coquihalla Summit Recreation Area in the system of provincial parks and recreation areas.

The resource management objective is to ensure that Ministry of Parks goals are met by:

- protecting the natural and heritage resources of the recreation area
- monitoring use impacts and resource conditions so that appropriate actions may be taken
- establishing guidelines that will protect the recreation area's conservation/ recreation resources

5.2 Objectives/Actions/Policies

5.2.1 Land Management

Objectives: To maintain existing park values and to eliminate incompatible resource uses and interests from the recreation area in preparation of Class "A" Park designation.

To acquire the recreation and cultural opportunities and features associated with the historic Kettle Valley Railroad.

Actions:

- Mineral values will be assessed in accordance with ministry protocol agreements to determine their significance and management options.
- Utility rights-of-way will be managed in concert with the companies for recreational use where appropriate and monitored on an on-going basis for adverse impact on park values.

- Negotiate with the owners of the Kettle Valley Railroad to acquire the right-of-way or rights to use it for recreation and a commitment to protect the heritage structures.
- Liaison with Ministry of Highways will continue on an on-going basis to ensure co-operative and co-ordinated implementation of highway programs and proposals affecting park values.

5.2.2 Water Management

Objective:

To maintain the recreation area's watersheds in their natural condition, free from contamination or pollution to benefit park visitors, vegetation, wildlife and downstream users.

Actions:

- Ensure sanitary facilities are properly designed and located.
- Minimize soil erosion through revegetation and careful construction techniques.
- Provide public information on water conservation and consumption as well as the safe disposal of grey water.

5.2.3 Vegetation Management

Objective:

To maintain the recreation area's plant communities as a natural dynamic ecosystem and to minimize the impact from recreational and non-recreational uses.

Actions:

- Allow disease or other hazards caused by nature to take their natural courses, except in circumstances where human life, facilities or resources outside the recreation area boundary are threatened.
- Reclaim utility rights-of-way with a native species of ground cover and maintain by environmentally compatible methods as described in approved vegetation management plans.
- Undertake a biophysical inventory of the recreation area resources, including geology, soils, vegetation and wildlife.
- With the Ministry of Highways co-ordinate the management of the vegetation in the highway right-of-way.
- In keeping with ministry policy, prohibit commercial forest harvesting.

5.2.4 Fish and Wildlife

Objective:

To maintain existing wildlife resources and enhance fish resources while honouring prior rights for guided hunting.

Actions:

- Inventory main wildlife species and habitat to establish a baseline for monitoring change.
- Initiate studies and actions required to improve Falls and Coquihalla Lakes for fish stocking.
- Co-ordinate wildlife management plans with the Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Transportation and Highways.
- Hunting will be permitted.

5.2.5 Cultural Resource Management

Objective:

To stabilize the heritage features of the Kettle Valley Railway and present the early railway transportation and pack horse trails transportation themes.

Actions:

- Assess and make recommendations for the stabilization of the Falls Creek trestle and to make the railway tunnels safe.
- Provide interpretive information on the Kettle Valley Railway.

5.2.6 Visual Resource Management

Objectives:

To retain the scenic qualities of the highway corridor and improve visual access to park features.

Actions:

- Monitor land management on adjacent lands to ensure the impact on the recreation area is minimized.
- Minimize the visual impact of park developments or any management action by taking into consideration viewpoints, viewsheds and visual features.

6.0 VISITOR SERVICES MANAGEMENT

6.1 Introduction

The visitor services concept for the Coquihalla Summit Recreation Area is to first provide a variety of short duration recreational opportunities and convenient services for the travelling public, and second, to provide a minimum level of visitor services destination recreational opportunities. The private sector in the vicinity can provide commercial services such as accommodation and food services. Fundamental to the success of the visitor services concept are convenient access and comprehensive information services.

Existing vehicle access in the recreation area will remain unchanged with the exception of Coquihalla Lakes where road improvements and parking facilities will be provided. Significant improvements in foot access will result from the proposed trail development.

Although the information strategy for the recreation area has thus far focused on the needs of the travelling public to locate park trailheads and rest stops, over the term of this plan information efforts will focus on the identification and promotion of the recreational opportunities and visitor services currently available and to be developed.

6.2 Visitor Opportunities/Objectives

Visitor Opportunity	Objective	Facilities/Services/ Actions Required (Figure 3)
Picnicking	To expand picnicking opportunities	Develop a picnic area complete with water, sanitation and garbage facilities at Coquihalla Lakes
Swimming	To provide the opportunity for swimming in Coquihalla Lakes	Provide easy water access and areas for sunbathing
Fishing	To provide fishing opportunities associated with road and hiking accessible water	(see resource management)
Ski Touring	To provide a variety of back-country skiing opportunities	Establish winter access and promote ski tour routes to Baldwin and Falls Lakes
Rock Climbing	To ensure access to the climbing walls of Needle Peak and Zopkios Ridge	Develop 6 km of trails to Needle Peak and Zopkios Ridge
Hiking/ Backpacking	To provide a variety of short duration and overnight hiking/ backpacking opportunities	Develop the canyon rim trail, Britton Ridge trail, Railway trail. Falls Lake trail and back-country campsites at Falls and Baldwin Lakes and Trestleview
Viewing	To provide the opportunity to view natural resources from vehicles and/or on foot	(No specific actions required) Develop the Zopkios Avalanche interpretive trail

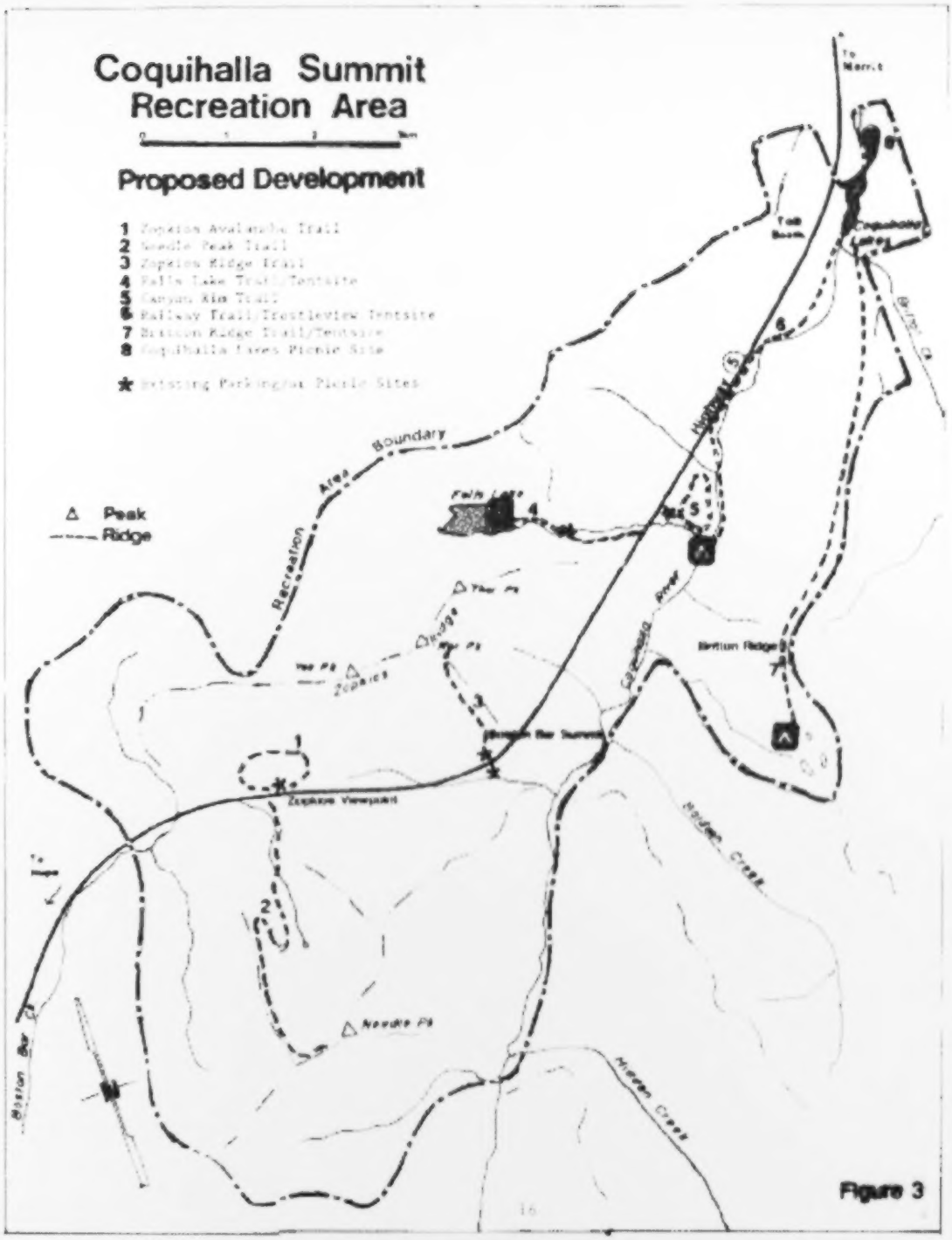

Coquihalla Summit
Recreation Area
Proposed Development
1 Zopkios Avalanche Trail
2 Needle Peak Trail
3 Zopkios Ridge Trail
4 Falls Lake Trail/Tentsite
5 Canyon Rim Trail
6 Railway Trail/Trestleview Tentsite
7 Britton Ridge Trail/Tentsite
8 Coquihalla Lakes Picnic Site
Existing Parking/or Picnic Sites
Peak
Ridge
Recreation Area Boundary
Falls Lake
Zopkios Viewpoint
Needle Pk
Britton Ridge
Coquihalla River
Hidden Creek
Britton Creek

Figure 3

6.3 Management Services

(i) Headquarters and Service Yard

This recreation area is managed from the park office at Cultus Lake.

(ii) Site and Facility Design Standards

All facilities will meet the standards of the Ministry of Parks. Emphasis will be on consideration of safety, visual values and efficient operation, while at the same time will provide aesthetic, durable and cost-efficient products.

6.4 Promotion and Information Program

Promotion and information for the recreation area is a critical step in making the public aware of the features and opportunities available and to encourage visitation. The promotion strategy for the Coquihalla Summit Recreation Area will emphasize the challenging backcountry opportunities, the scenic drive and the rest stop attractions such as the Zopkios Viewpoint and the Falls Creek waterfall.

The promotion strategy is implemented through the information services available in the park system from maps and brochures to signs, information shelters, promotional slide shows and various media communication. The tourist information centres in Merritt and Hope are important distribution centres for information on the recreation area.

In addition to the promotional aspects of the information strategy, the resources and natural features are interpreted and presented to the public to enhance their understanding and enjoyment of the recreation area. The natural features to be emphasized include the two main peaks: Zopkios Ridge and Needle Peak, Falls and Coquihalla Lakes and in addition, the cultural features associated with the Kettle Valley Railway. These themes will be presented to the public through on-site signs and brochures. To improve the identification of the recreation area while travelling on the highway, entrance portals will be established for the northern and southern boundaries.

7.0 PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

The improved vehicle access to the recreation area provided by the Coquihalla Highway has placed some urgency on the development of park facilities. Areas that have traditionally been used infrequently, such as Falls Lake, are now being used much more frequently and without facilities to control errant use. Consequently, some resource damage is occurring as a result of self-made trails and campsites.

The following list prioritizes the implementation of the plan's recommendations:

PHASE I
- Develop the trail access and tent site at Falls Lake
- Conduct mineral evaluation

PHASE II
- Conduct the biophysical inventory
- Develop Zopkios Ridge Trail
- Develop Needle Peak Trail
- Develop Zopkios Avalanche Interpretive Trail

PHASE III
- Develop Canyon Rim Trail
- Develop Coquihalla Lake Picnic Site
- Study the stabilization requirements for railway tunnels and trestle.

PHASE IV
- Develop Britton Ridge Trail/Tentsite
- Develop Railway Trail and Trestleview Tentsite

COQUIHALLA SUMMIT RECREATION AREA
MASTER PLAN
APPENDIX I
Background Report

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The 5,750 hectare Coquihalla Summit Recreation Area was designated in 1986. It is located at the summit of the Coquihalla Highway and exhibits considerable resource diversity.

The Coquihalla Valley served as the major transportation route into the interior beginning with the Hope-Nicola Trail in 1876 and continuing with the Kettle Valley Railway from the early 1900s to 1961. In subsequent years, limited access for vehicles kept the valley the strict domain of resource companies, as well as hunters and fishermen. With the construction of the new highway and designation of the recreation area, easy access is now available.

The Coquihalla Highway traverses through the centre of the recreation area, providing good access for those in the Lower Mainland area and the Okanagan. The recreation area has four highway access points: Zopkios Lookout, Falls Creek, Coquihalla Lakes and Boston Bar Creek. Each is accessible for both northbound and southbound traffic.

2.0 NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

2.1 Natural Resources

2.1.1 Physiography

The recreation area is situated at the transition between two regional landscapes: the Coast-Cascade Dry Belt and the Thompson Plateau. Natural characteristics common to both landscapes are visible; however, the recreation area boundaries encompass only features of the Coast-Cascade Dry Belt.

The Coast-Cascade Dry Belt is a dry leeward belt of mountains where the biogeoclimatic pattern differs from the adjacent northern leeward transition belt. Although glaciers and icefields are virtually absent, there are some serrated peaks and ridges in the recreation area: Needle (1, 370 m), Zopkios (1, 645 m), Yak (2,042 m), Thar (1, 920 m) and Zoa (1, 860 m). Rounded summits below tree line are another physiographic characteristic of this landscape, but they occur at the periphery of the recreation area boundary. The Coquihalla River and its tributary creeks and lakes extend throughout the area and are significant physiographic features.

2.1.2 Bedrock/Surficial Geology

The general geology of the area is a mixture of intrusive igneous rock and folded and faulted volcanic and sedimentary rocks. The high mica content in many of the rock formations has resulted in the shearing of rock. Needle Peak and Zopkios Ridge are outstanding examples of rock shearing that add to the special attraction of the area.

In terms of surficial geology, the main valley is primarily glacial in origin. Throughout the area there are extensive moraine and fluvial deposits on the valley floor. Colluvial materials and evidence of mass wasting are also present.

2.1.3 Soils

Soils in the Coquihalla Summit Recreation Area are primarily Humo-Ferric Podzols (Podzolic Order). These soils are typical for coastal coniferous forests with cool, moist climates. Soil parent materials are mostly coarse textured and well drained and consequently are not readily subject to impacts from hiker traffic. However, within the Coquihalla Summit Recreation Area, there are soil types that are sensitive to use, such as fine-textured, wetland areas found in the sub-alpine zone, and the weakly developed (regosol) soils found in the alpine zone.

2.1.4 Climate

Climatic conditions in the recreation area are extreme. Some of the deepest snow packs in the province occur, with an average of 1,080 cm (35+ ft.) of snowfall during a winter season (based on 34 years of C.P.R. snowfall records) with snowpacks as deep as 300 cm (10 ft.) measured at Coquihalla Lakes (1,125 m elevation). This high snowfall is the result of cool, moist marine air flowing up the Fraser Valley (Vancouver-Hope) and rising up into the high summit area to precipitate as snow. Heavy snowpacks can linger into mid-summer. While the snow supports winter recreational activities, it also adds an element of avalanche danger in the steep terrain.

The summer season is generally short. Weather tends to be wet and cool; however, the southerly aspect of much of the terrain receives greater sunshine for warmth throughout the year.

2.1.5 Vegetation (Biogeoclimatic Zones)

To assist in understanding the distribution of vegetation in British Columbia, vegetation is classified into a number of groups or zones and sub-zones based upon distinct patterns in predominant species, geology, soils and elevation. Coquihalla Summit Recreation Area has four biogeoclimatic zones represented: Coastal Western Hemlock, Mountain Hemlock, Englemann Spruce - Subalpine Fir and Alpine Tundra.

The Alpine Tundra zone is found at the highest elevations of the recreation area and is characterized by hardy compact shrub species like alpine heathers, alpine azaleas and Crowberry (*Empetrum nigrum*). Mountain Hemlock (*Tsuga mertensiana*), Englemann Spruce (*Picea glauca*) or Sub-alpine Fir (*Abies lasiocarpa*) are often present as krumholz.

Needle Peak Alpine

The valley slopes are occupied by the Englemann Spruce - Subalpine Fir zone on the eastern slopes, while the western slopes are included in a Mountain Hemlock zone. Subalpine Fir can also be found in the Mountain Hemlock zone along with Black Mountain Huckleberry (*Vaccinium membranaceum*) and White Rhododendron (*Rhododendron albiflorum*). In the Englemann Spruce - Subalpine Fir zone, additional differentiating species include Amabilis fir (*Abies amabilis*), Trailing Rubus (*Rubus pedatus*), Western Mountain Ash (*Sorbus scopulina*) and Foam Flower (*Tiarella unifoliata*).

On the valley floor, the Coastal Western Hemlock zone is evident by the predominance of Coastal Western Hemlock (*Tsuga heterophylla*), Douglas fir (*Pseudatsuga menziesii*) with understory plants such as Vanilla Leaf (*Achlys triphylla*), Oregon grape (*Mahonia nervosa*), Sword Fern (*Polystichum munitum*).

2.1.6 Water Resources

Coquihalla and Falls Lakes are the main water resources of the recreation area. Falls Lake is a small shallow lake with a surface area of 25.6 hectares and a mean depth of 9.9 metres. With a Secchi reading of 8.5 metres the water is very clear and free of sediment; however, there is a very low abundance of aquatic vegetation. Its shoreline is steeply sloped to the north and south and gently sloping in the east and west. Although the drainage area of the lake is small, the significant volume of snowfall substantially contributes to the water supply. Water temperature in July averages about 6°C.

Coquihalla Lakes

Coquihalla Lakes consists of two water bodies joined by a narrow 3-4 metre wide channel. The total surface of both bodies is only 18 hectares with a mean depth of 2 metres. The water colour is clear enough to see bottom. There are considerable logs and debris along the shoreline in the channel and at the outlet. Temperature readings taken in June indicate an average of about 10^0C.

2.1.7 Fish Resources

The main fish resources are in Falls Lake and Coquihalla Lakes. While the Coquihalla River is well known for its Pacific Salmon and Steelhead fishery, the shallow water above Baldwin Creek does not support any fish.

Coquihalla Lake and Falls Lake fishery are made up exclusively of Rainbow Trout, stocked over a number of years in the 1950s; however, since the closing of the railway, no lake stocking has occurred. Lake surveys conducted in 1979 and 1982 indicate a viable self-sustaining fishery with a good range of catchable sizes from 20 cm to 55 cm.

2.1.8 Wildlife

There is a diversity of wildlife in the recreation area. The primary large mammals are mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*), Mountain goat (*Oreamnos americanus*) and Black Bear (*Ursus americanus*). Deer are present only during the summer months. Large wildlife that might be present owing to proximity to their known distribution are moose (*Alces andersoni*), Rocky Mountain Elk (*Cervus elaphus nelsonii*) and Grizzly Bear (*Ursus arctos*), Cougar (*Felis concolor*) and Wolves (*Canus lupis*).

There are also many opportunities to view a diversity of small mammals and birds because the habitats created by the interior/coastal transition, varied aspects, and past forest fires. Rocky Mountain Pika (*Ochotona princeps*) and Hoary Marmot (*Marmota caligata*) are found in the rocky areas of the high alpine; snowshoe hares (*Lepus americanus*) Coyote (*Canis latrans*) and Marten (*Martes americana*) are visible in open forest meadows, while chipmunks (*Tamias sp.*) and squirrels (*Tamiasciurus hudsonicus*) can be seen along the forest edges.

2.1.9 Outdoor Recreation and Visual Features

The major outdoor recreation features and visual features of the recreation area are one in the same. There are five features that are the main visual attractions for the park as well as the principal outdoor recreation features. These include the Needle Peak massif, the Zopkios Ridge massif, Falls Lake, Falls Creek Falls and the Coquihalla Lakes.

Both the Needle Peak massif and the Zopkios Ridge massif visually dominate the recreation area with their serrated peaks and smooth granite slopes lying in contrast to the forested valley bottoms. They offer a wide range of rock climbing, ridge hiking, nordic skiing and viewing opportunities, while from the valley floor they are the main scenic attraction. Below each peak are two small lakes that provide additional scenic attraction and trail opportunities.

Falls Lake is a high elevation lake situated in a natural enclosure of steep forested slopes and talus chutes. Its exceptionally clear water and attractive setting provide a number of viewing and recreational opportunities including fishing, hiking and camping.

The Coquihalla Lakes have a number of potential recreational opportunities including a variety of camping, hiking, swimming, picnicking and nordic skiing. Much of the forest cover in this area had been burnt off during wild fires; however, there is little evidence of this.

Canoeing on Falls Lake

The Falls Lake Creek falls is a waterfall formed from the outlet creek of Falls Lake as it flows under the Coquihalla Highway and joins with the Coquihalla River. Although only visible from the bottom and rim of the Coquihalla Valley, the hidden waterfall is an attractive feature that is becoming popular as more people become aware of it.

Falls Lake Creek Falls

2.2 Cultural Resources

The historic Kettle Valley Railway is the only cultural resource associated with the recreation area. Although currently owned by a utility company, it is likely to be added to the park pending negotiations. This railroad played a major role in assisting in the development of the province. It operated from 1916 as a passenger and freight service between Vancouver and Nelson; however, constantly plagued by numerous rock and snow slides, the line was eventually abandoned in 1961. The remaining significant features include several short tunnels and a wooden trestle that crosses Falls Creek.

Coquihalla River with the Kettle Valley Railway trestle in the foreground and the Trans Mountain Oil pipeline in the background

2.3 Resource Analysis

The natural and cultural resources of the Coquihalla Summit Recreation Area contribute to serving both the recreation and conservation goals of the Ministry of Parks.

Conservation Goals:

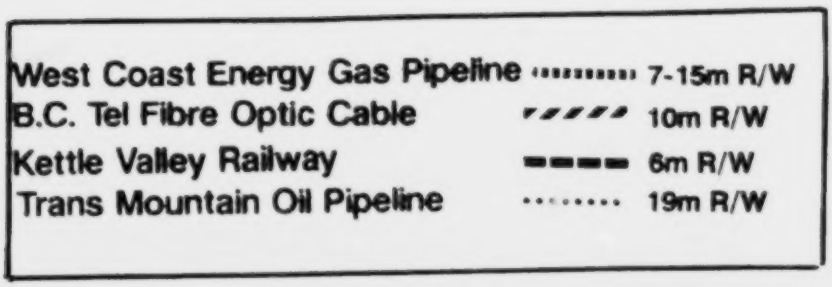
With the exception of rounded summits below tree line, the resources of the recreation area that satisfactorily represent the Coast Cascade Dry Belt Regional Landscape are the geology and physiography. In addition, two of the four biogeoclimatic zones associated with this landscape are represented with the omitted zones represented by other park areas; Manning, Cathedral and Birkenhead Lake. Although the Coast-Cascade Dry Belt is the natural landscape represented by the recreation area, about one-half of the characteristics of this landscape are represented by the park's resources.

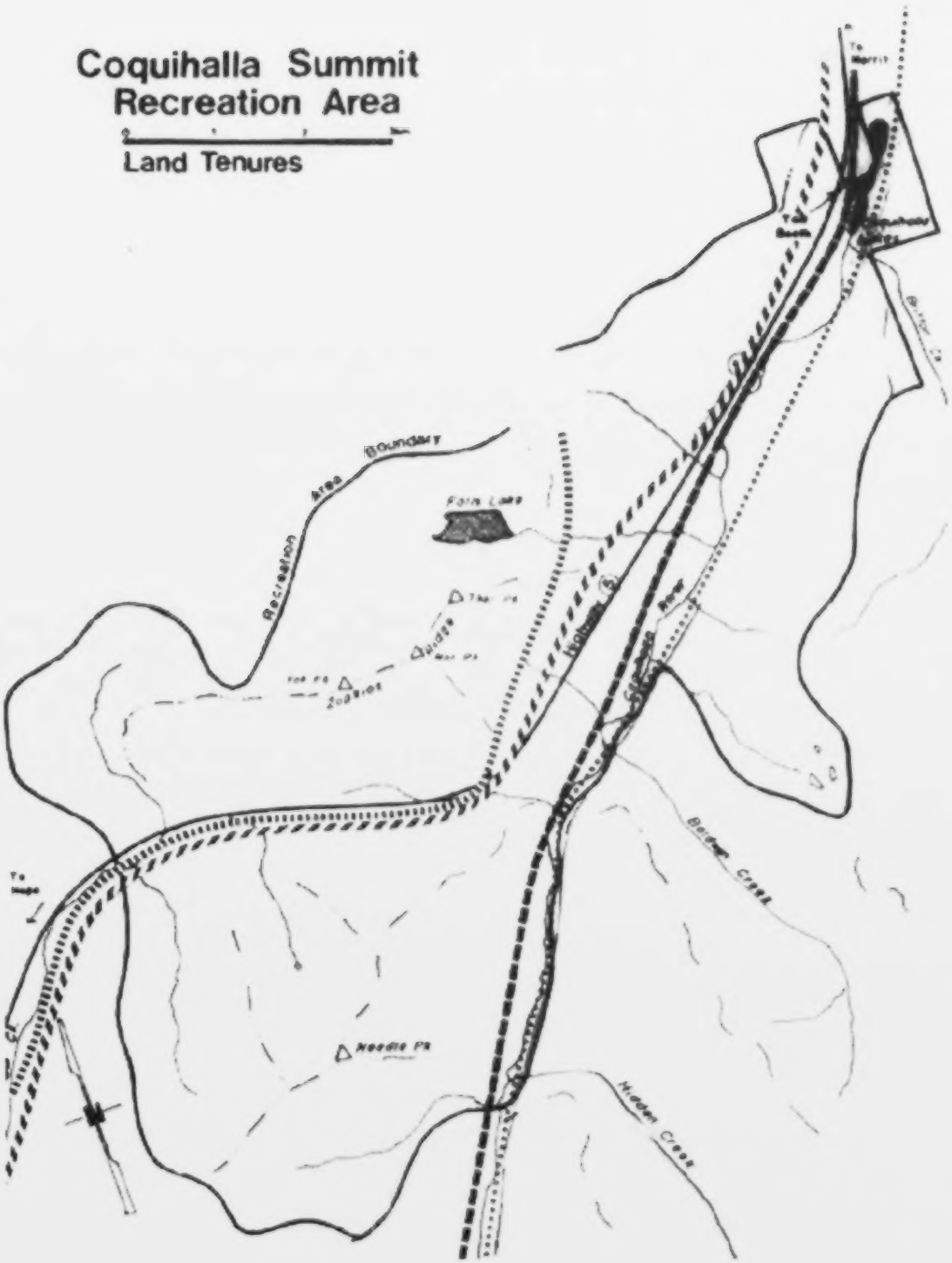
Recreation Goals:

The recreation area's resources collectively contribute to serving ministry recreation goals by acting as the facilitator for recreational opportunities, for example, the lakes providing fishing and swimming opportunities, while other resources such as the forest cover and mountain slopes providing the natural setting for the activities.

3.0 TENURES, OCCUPANCY RIGHTS AND JURISDICTIONS (Figure 4)

Leases/Permits	- None
Fee Simple Inholdings	- None
Forest Tenures	- None
Rights-of-Way	- Trans Mountain Pipeline R/W Agreement #150 - West Coast Energy Gas Pipeline R/W Agreement #2920 - British Columbia Telephone Co. Fiber Optic Cable R/W under negotiations
Mineral Claims	- None
Statutory Jurisdiction	- None
Guiding	- Guide Outfitter Certificate 267
Hunting	- Traditional hunting area for the Coldwater Indian band


West Coast Energy Gas Pipeline 7-15m R/W
B.C. Tel Fibre Optic Cable 10m R/W
Kettle Valley Railway 6m R/W
Trans Mountain Oil Pipeline 19m R/W


Coquihalla Summit
Recreation Area
Land Tenures
Recreation Area Boundary
Hoodoo Mtn
Boston Creek
Hidden Creek

4.0 EXISTING RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND FACILITIES

Since the recreation area was only recently established, few facilities have been provided other than parking areas and picnicking facilities along the highway at the Zopkios viewpoint, Boston Bar and Falls Creek. These areas provide nearly 90 parking spaces in total. In addition to the viewing opportunities associated with these facilities, there are other opportunities that are not necessarily facility oriented but are inherently provided by park resources. These include fishing in Falls Lake and Coquihalla Lakes, rock climbing on the Zopkios and Needle Peaks, hunting in the surrounding drainages, snowmobiling and back-country skiing in the Britton Creek area and other tributaries of the Tulameen River.

Rock climbing opportunities on Needle Peak

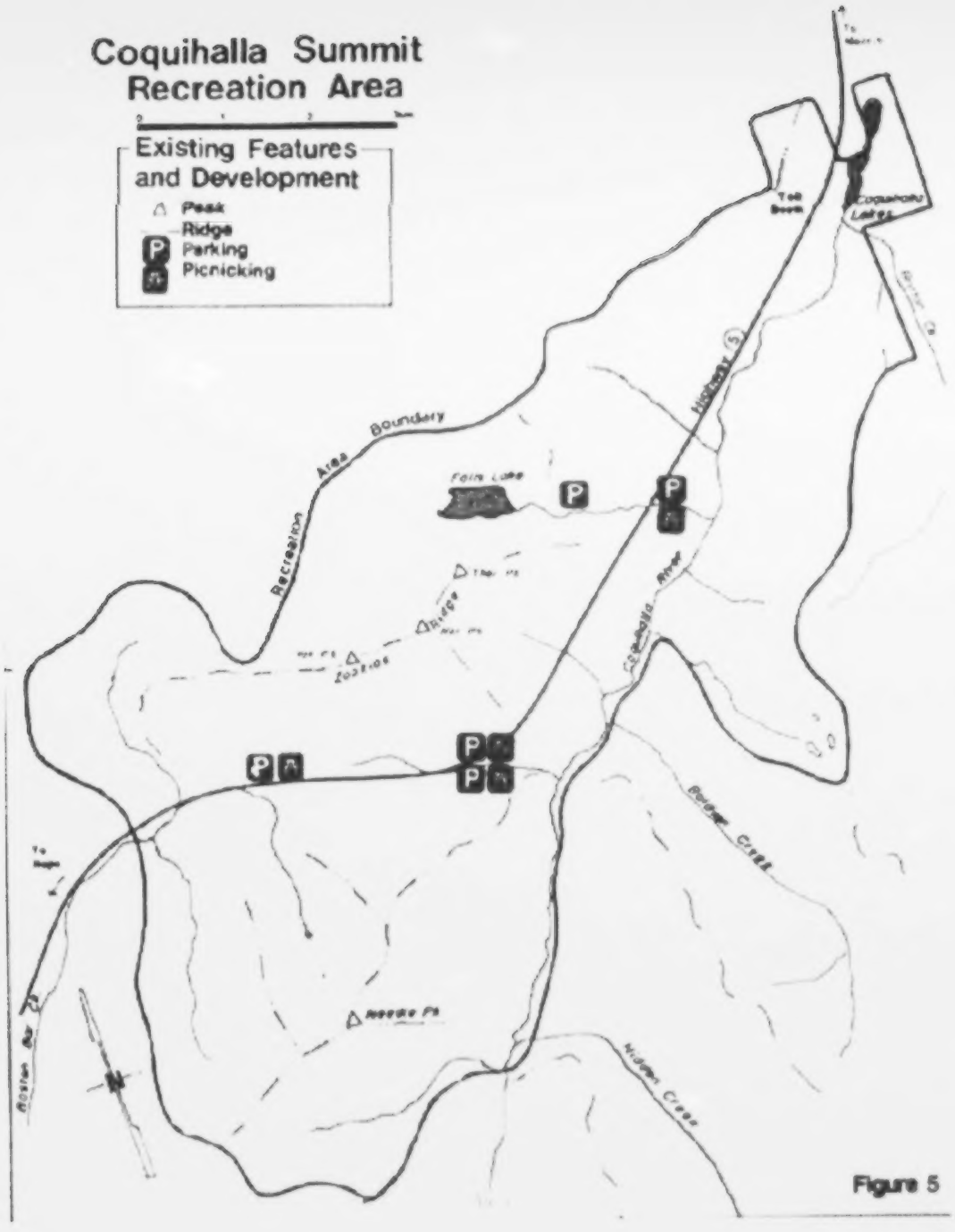

Coquihalla Summit
Recreation Area
Existing Features
and Development
Peak
Ridge
Parking
Picnicking
Recreation Area Boundary
Highway 5
Coquihalla River
Boston Creek
Hidden Creek

Figure 5

5.0 MARKET ANALYSIS

Marketing information and use indicators are mostly non-existent as recreational use patterns have yet to develop and as there is limited public awareness of park resources and opportunities. Some indication of park use and demand can be extrapolated from the limited information available, field observations and highway use statistics.

5.1 Existing Use

There are primarily two main types of use patterns at present: destination backcountry use, such as hunting and fishing and travel corridor day use opportunities. The former are traditional recreational uses that are dispersed over a large area and poorly documented. Summer day use, on the other hand, has been recorded for 1987 and 1988. During the summer of 1987, nearly 20,000 parties visited the recreation area, while summer day use in 1988 increased about 60% to over 32,000 parties.

5.2 Demand

The aforementioned attendance figures provide a short term indication of demand based upon the consumption of service. Additional evidence of demand can be derived by comparing highway traffic volumes since use levels of the recreation area have a direct relationship to the volume of vehicles passing through.

In 1985, the traffic count for July and August on the Fraser Canyon Highway was 8,436 vehicles per day. In 1987, after construction of the Coquihalla Highway, the Fraser Canyon count was down by almost 50% to 4,649 vehicles per day, while the Coquihalla Highway received over 6,000 vehicles per day for July and August of 1987. It does not appear that

the Hope-Princeton route was affected by the Coquihalla Highway. Over 6,200 vehicles per day were recorded in 1985 for the Hope-Princeton route, while in 1987, the volumes had dropped marginally to 6,116 vehicles per day. Judging by these statistics, the Coquihalla Highway is becoming as popular as the Fraser Canyon route and the general demand for recreational opportunities appears to be growing.

The evidence of demand for camping opportunities, on the other hand, presents an opposite view. A private campground adjacent to the recreation area has experienced little growth in business since the opening of the highway. As a recreation trend, easy access camping has been on the decline throughout the province over the past few years.

6.0 KEY ISSUES

6.1 Types and Level of Development

Although there has been some initial development in the recreation area to provide access off the Coquihalla Highway and meet the rest area needs of the public, further development could significantly enhance park opportunities by providing a greater number of things to do. Although there is at present, little evidence of demand for increased opportunities at this location, the following are the main options to consider for development.

Option #1 - Maintain Status Quo

To maintain the present situation would have no short term impact in view of present low use levels. Over the course of several years, however, repeat visitations may require more diverse opportunities and services in order to encourage continued use.

Option #2 - Develop Camping Opportunities

As previously indicated, there is presently little evidence of demand for camping opportunities in this section of the Coquihalla Highway. In view of the availability of camping opportunities at a private campground by Coquihalla Lakes, the extensive camping opportunities at Hope and Merritt and the high speed, limited stopping nature of the Coquihalla Highway, providing camping opportunities at the Coquihalla Recreation Area may be premature at this time.

Option #3 - Develop Day Use Opportunities

The development of a variety of dispersed day use recreational opportunities is a viable development strategy at present, given the lack of demand for major concentrated uses, such as camping and the need to encourage awareness and use of the recreation area. Park resources have the potential to provide for a variety of opportunities from hiking to ski touring that would assist off-road access and encourage the development of recreational use patterns.

6.2 Mining in the Recreation Area

Although there are currently no mineral claims in the recreation area, the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources believes significant mineralization could potentially exist. Mineral exploration and possibly development would be necessary before the recreation area could be upgraded to Class "A" Park status.

The impact of mineral exploration on recreation values can be limited to a low level; however, mineral extraction over a long period could make a substantial impact on the recreation resources of such a relatively small recreation area.

6.3 Rights-of-Way Management

The utility rights-of-way in the recreation area present management considerations that require balancing the needs of the various companies with those of the recreation area. Although industrial uses are not normally compatible with backcountry or tourist oriented recreational opportunities, the impact of the rights-of-way is primarily a visual impact which can be mitigated to some degree, particularly in key areas, such as trailheads and viewpoints. In addition, the cleared corridors provide improved wildlife habitat for many species and also present the opportunity for use as a recreation corridor for trails and skiing. The abandoned Kettle Valley Railroad right-of-way in particular has good potential for hiking trail access to the eastern portions of the recreation area to view some of the heritage features associated with the railroad, such as the wood trestle crossing Falls Creek. Although owned by a utility company, negotiations to acquire the right-of-way looks promising as no specific use has yet been designated for the land.

The main management considerations are to ensure visual impacts are addressed and that the rights-of-way are managed and maintained compatible with the surrounding natural environment.

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